WITH *the* LITTLE FOLKS

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With the Little Folks

SUNNY BOY LOOKED UP. "I KNOW YOU, MRS. MOTHER BIRD," HE ANSWERED

With the Little Folks

By

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With Illustrations by Harold Cue

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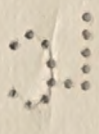

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Drawn by Harold Cue

With the Little Folks

Sunny Boy

Once upon a time, not very long ago, there was a little boy who liked funny things very much. He liked funny faces, and funny names, and funny noises, and funny games. He had twinkles in both of his eyes, and the corners of his mouth turned up.

One day he said to his mother, "Please tell me a funny story, — some pun to make me laugh."

So the little boy's mother told him the funniest story that she knew, and he laughed and laughed, till his yellow curls danced and a little sunbeam stole right in through the window and danced with them. Then his mother said, "Run out-doors, little Sunny Boy, and play."

So Sunny Boy put on his little white sailor hat and ran outdoors to find something more to laugh about.

"I know what will make him laugh," said a tall wheat-stalk. "He carried water to me yesterday, so I'll tickle him to-day." So she bent down very quietly and tickled Sunny Boy right in the back of his little neck. And Sunny Boy laughed and laughed. "Do it some more!" he cried.

"I can make him laugh, too," whistled the wind. "He's a playmate of mine. We often run races together." And with that, the old wind whisked Sunny Boy's hat right off his head and carried it across the yard and down the street. Sunny Boy raced after it, laughing all the way, and he caught it, too.

"I know another way to make him laugh," said the bumble-bee. "He invites me into his garden every day and lets me

eat honey from the flowers. I 'll make him laugh."

And "buzz-z-z-z" said the bumble-bee, right in Sunny Boy's ear. Then he flew to the other ear and said, "Buzz-z-z." And Sunny Boy turned first one way and then the other. "I know you, Mr. Bee!" he shouted, and he laughed, and laughed. "Do it some more! Do it some more!"

It was just then that the puppy came around the corner of the house, and heard all the fun. "Sunny Boy is my chum," he announced. "I can make him laugh." And with that the puppy bounded up where Sunny Boy was sitting and gave him a wee little bite on the ear. Then he chewed his toes with teeth as white as snow and pulled and tugged at them with all his puppy might, barking his sharp little "Oof! Oof!"

Over and over they rolled on the grass and made such a merry din that Mother

came to the window and of course she laughed, too.

"Cheer! cheer!" sang a little bird as she flew by. "What is all the fun about?"

"Oh, we are just making Sunny Boy laugh," said the wheat-stalk.

"Well! well!" said the little bird. "He is the boy who puts crumbs out in the back yard for me. I know how to make him laugh. Cheer! cheer!" she called.

Sunny Boy looked up. "I know you, Mrs. Mother Bird," he answered. "You have a nest in the front yard with eggs in it."

"Twee! twee! Come with me!" sang Mrs. Mother Bird.

And Sunny Boy jumped right up and followed her.

And what do you suppose he saw? Four little baby birds without any feathers on them and their yellow mouths stretched wide open.

PULLED AND TUGGED AT THEM WITH ALL HIS PUPPY MIGHT, BARKING HIS SHARP LITTLE "OOF! OOF!"

"Ho! ho! ho!" laughed Sunny Boy. "You funny little babies! Your mouths are as big as your heads!" And Mother laughed, too, when she looked at them.

"There is something in the house that wants to laugh with you," she said, and you may believe that Sunny Boy hurried in.

And there was his own supper on the table waiting for him. What do you suppose it was? A big bowl of bread and milk with big raisins for eyes and nose and mouth. And the raisin mouth was wide open and laughing. And when Father came in, Sunny Boy's mouth was just the same and so was Mother's, and so, of course, Father had to join in.

Even the washcloth, with which Mother washed Sunny Boy's face after supper, seemed to enter into the fun of making Sunny Boy merry.

"A washrag is a funny thing," said

Sunny Boy. "It always plays the tickles with you. I like a washrag."

"So do I," said Mother, "and I'm very glad it can't wash the 'Laughs' away."

Then she tucked him into bed.

"Good-night, Sunny Boy," she whispered, "and funny dreams!"

The Garden of Bluebells

Once in the days of Long Ago, there lived a wee man in a wee house. The house was old and the wee man was old, but his heart was as young as the springtime, and as glad as the bluebells growing in his garden. Such wonderful bluebells they were, deeply blue, like the springtime skies, and a touch of gold at their hearts like the sunbeams that shone upon them. From far and wide people flocked to see them, and whenever they entered the garden, the bluebells seemed to ring a welcome as they swayed in the morning breeze, and folks did declare they could hear them sing, "Come, joy with us, for it is springtime! It is springtime!"

And springtime it seemed to be for them always. Summer and winter alike they

blossomed on. Although snow covered the ground elsewhere, it always melted on the garden plot where the bluebells were growing. All the year round they looked up at the blue sky or nodded to the merry country folks who came to walk among them. "They are bewitched!" said one and all; "but it is a sweet witchery that keeps us all glad."

And now it chanced one morning that a certain rich man passed by and heard the happy voices of those who made merry among the flowers. He stamped the snow from his feet as he came up the garden path and it melted into wee drops of water that glistened in the sun.

"Bluebells! and growing in the winter-time?" he asked; "and how is that?"

"I know not how it be," smiled the wee man, "but it seems to be their way to bloom always and to sing."

And from every little bluebell cup a wee

voice sang to the rich man, "Come, joy with us, for it is spring! It is spring!"

"Hear them!" said the wee man, and his face was covered with the sunniest of smiles.

"I hear nothing," said the rich man, "but the soil must be wonderful to grow flowers summer and winter. A pity it be not planted to some more useful thing than bluebells."

"Nay!" said the wee man, "but they keep all the country folk glad with their blooming."

"And what matters that?" The rich man frowned. "Let the country folk seek elsewhere for their gladness. I shall speak to the King about it. Magic ground should be planted to better advantage. A wonderful crop of useful things could this ground yield, summer and winter."

"An it please you," smiled the wee man again, "what better could a garden yield than happiness?"

"Many things," asserted the rich man as he turned to go.

And it came to pass just as the rich man had said, for when he returned, days afterward, he carried with him huge bags of money. "The King sends you much gold in exchange for your garden plot," he cried. "You can have now all that heart could desire, and the garden will grow useful crops for the King."

So the gardeners went to work with plough and spade and they uprooted all the bluebells, and in their place they planted cabbages and beets and turnips. And the wee man stayed in the house and lighted his little stove and sat down beside it. And when the country folks came to walk again in the garden, they were sad. "Ah, me!" they cried, "'t is spring no more, but winter." And they shivered and went home.

And the next morning the snow fell

thicker and faster. It covered the beets and cabbages and the turnips with a white mantle and it froze them stiff. And the rich man came running quickly when he heard of it.

"There is a bluebell somewhere in the garden," he told the wee man. "And it has bewitched the ground. We must search for it."

And over the garden plot went the rich man and his workers. They dug up the frozen cabbages and beets and turnips and they spaded the hard ground, and just as they were about to give up, a small voice sang out, "Come, joy with me, for it is springtime! It is springtime!"

"Ah! My little bluebell!" cried the wee man, as he bent down to it. But the rich man pulled it up and tore the blossom from the stem and threw it out into the street.

"Now the garden will grow useful things!" he said.

That night, when none were looking, the wee man crept out to the street and picked up the bluebell root and planted it in a little box. And it grew and blossomed for him in the little wee house.

And once again in the garden plot they planted the cabbages and beets and turnips. And no sooner were they planted than there came a swarm of locusts. No other garden did the locusts touch, but they ate all the cabbages and the beets and the turnips, leaf and stem and stalk, and left the ground bare and brown.

"Now, by my word!" vowed the rich man when he heard of it, "'t is the wee man himself who has bewitched the ground. He must be taken away that the garden may grow its wonderful crop of useful things for the King."

So again he came to the wee man with

bags of money. "The King sends you more gold," he said, "and he asks that you journey to the castle court and there abide that the garden may the better grow and yield wonderful crops of useful things."

"An it please the King," answered the wee man, "I will go." And underneath his coat he slipped the bluebell plant.

And again they planted the garden with cabbages and beets and turnips, but no sooner were they planted than a fierce and blazing sun scorched the leaves and withered them. It crackled the stems till they snapped, and once again the ground was bare and brown.

"Somewhere there still lives one of the bluebells!" shouted the rich man; "an it take the half of my fortune, I will find it. Who knows but what the wee man himself is keeping it alive. I, myself,

will journey to the King's castle, and see the last bluebell torn root from flower."

Even as he spoke, he prepared to journey forth.

And while he journeyed, strange things were happening in the King's castle. In a wee hut in the outer courtyard dwelt the wee man, and though no one knew it, there dwelt with him the little bluebell. Every morning it sang to him, and the wee man laughed as he joyed with it. And as it sang one morning, the King's little lame daughter passed by on her crutches, and, hearing it, the little Princess came up the step and pushed the door open, saying, "Please sing the song again, wee man."

And the wee man helped her in as he said, "Nay, Princess, 't is not I who sing, but the bluebell." And he put it in her hand.

"Sing to me, little flower!" cried the King's daughter; and the bluebell sang

again, "Come, joy with me, for it is springtime! It is springtime!"

And the little Princess laughed and clapped her hands and, forgetting all about her crutch, she danced around the room as a happy little girl should do. And the wee man danced with her. And when they were tired of dancing, they sat down by the bluebell and the wee man told her wonderful stories of the spring. And those without, of the King's household, were searching for the little Princess in every place where a King's daughter was ever known to go, but they found her not.

And while they searched, the rich man came to the King from out of his journeying, and many a complaint had he to make of the bluebells and the wee man.

"Bother me not with your foolish bluebells!" cried the King. "Mine own little daughter is lost and none can find her."

Then the rich man came closer to the King. "If the wee man," he said, "can bewitch a garden, may it not be that he has bewitched the Princess as well? Let us seek him."

So the King hastened to the hut where dwelt the wee man, and boldly he pushed open the door. It was his little daughter who danced to meet him. "Come, joy with me!" she sang, "for it is springtime! It is springtime!"

"Your crutch, my child!" cried the King.

But the Princess laughed. "I had forgotten it, Father," she said as she ran to the bluebell. "See the wee man's flower! And it sings of the spring!"

"Ah!" spoke the rich man, "said I not so? The wee man's bluebell has bewitched the garden and now would bewitch the Princess, too. Let us rend it bloom from stem!"

But the Princess stood up straight and tall and her eyes flashed. "You shall not touch the wee man's bluebell!" she said.

Then the King spoke. "Tell us, wee man, how can a flower work such strange miracles?"

"That I know not, O King," answered the wee man. "It is but a flower from my garden, with leaf and stem and root like any other. Must it be destroyed because it sings only of the springtime?"

But the King's little daughter shook her head. "It shall live, wee man," she said, "and you and I together will plant a garden full of bluebells. And they will sing to us, and the King, my father, will walk among them and they will sing to him. Where shall we plant it, wee man?"

The wee man smiled. "An it please the King to grant it, I should like mine own garden back. Though all lands are fair, yet is there no place so dear as home."

"And you shall have your own back again," quoth the King, "and a shame on me that I ever made you sell it."

And so it all came to pass as the Princess and the King had said. Bluebells once more filled the wee man's garden and the country folk from near and far came back with smiles on their faces and joy in their hearts. Summer and winter they blossom and sing to all who enter the garden, "Come, joy with us, for it is springtime! It is springtime!"

And the King and the little Princess walk often with the wee man among the bluebells, for where better could a King and his royal little daughter walk than with those who sing ever of the springtime?

Little Princess Sunshine

In the far-off days of the "Used-to-be," two little children played together, sailing their boats in the waters of the fountain place. And as they played a little wee man, bent and old, came up to them.

"I am athirst," he said, "and mine old eyes are not so good as they once were. I see no cup to drink from."

"There is none," Winda replied, giving her black curls a toss as she went on sailing her boat.

But Wanda looked up and smiled. "I'll get you one," said she. And as she ran, her hair was a golden glow about her face and her skin gleamed white in the sunlight. And when she returned, the little wee man drank his fill of the fountain water. Then from his pocket he brought

forth something brown and sear and withered, and handed it to Wanda.

"My blessings upon you who had so much to give to me!" smiled the little wee man.

Then he reached into another pocket and turned to Winda. "And to you who had nothing to give to me, my blessings also!" And he gave her, too, a little brown something, withered and sear.

"Horrid old brown thing!" thought Winda to herself. "What shall I do with it?" she asked of him.

"Plant it." The little wee man smiled pleasantly.

"And then what?" Winda inquired.

"Whatever you shall give to it, it will return to you a thousand fold." And the little wee man was gone.

"Now, what could a brown, shriveled-up thing like this ever give to me?" said Winda with a toss of her head.

"I don't know," said Wanda, as she smoothed the little dried thing in her hand. And then they planted them.

Winda dug a little hole in a corner of the garden plot, and dropped into it her gift from the little wee man. "There!" she said crossly, as she threw the dirt over it, "I'm glad that's done!" And she put up a crooked stick to mark the place. "I'm sure it will not grow, and if it does, I know it will have ugly flowers on it."

Wanda dug a hole for hers in another corner of the garden plot, and when she had planted the little brown thing, she smoothed the dirt about it and patted it down and laughed as she laid a circle of little white pebbles around, to mark the place. Then she ran for a cup of water. "Now, little brown thing," she smiled, "I've given you a drink and tucked you up in bed, and I hope you

will have very happy dreams." And when she stood up she was singing to herself.

"How can an ugly brown thing like that have happy dreams?" Winda asked.

"I don't know," Wanda answered, "but I hope it will." Then she looked down at the garden plot. "I wonder what lovely thing you will grow to be, little hard ball," she laughed.

The days passed. Every morning Wanda watered the corner of the garden plot, circled with little white pebbles, and every morning, when Winda didn't forget, she watered the little corner marked by the crooked stick. And then one morning in shining spring a little leaf pushed its green head above the ground in Wanda's garden corner. But though Winda looked and looked, only the bare brown earth looked back at her. "I knew it wouldn't grow," she said as she tossed her head.

"I'm sorry," said Wanda, "but you can look at mine. It must have had happy dreams, Winda, and it is coming up to tell us about them."

And every day after that it told them more and more about its beautiful dream. Slowly a tall stem lifted itself in air, and many green leaves peeped through the ground, arranging themselves on the stem like court ladies-in-waiting and lords-in-attendance upon a princess who was to come. Every morning Wanda seemed to grow happier and happier, and every morning the stem grew taller and more stately, till at its peak there came a slender bud. It swelled and grew and burst one merry morning into a white, white lily.

"The princess has come!" Wanda called.

But Winda had grown tired of playing in the garden and was so far away that she could not even hear, so far away that she

never came back to see the regal lily that lifted its stately head above the green leaves — leaves that bowed and swayed in the wind like ladies-in-waiting and lords-in-attendance at high court. "Oh, you beautiful!" cried Wanda. "Your heart is as golden as the sunshine and your face is as white as the snows!" And she laid her cheek against it.

Then there arose from the unfolded lily a fragrance so sweet that passers-by from the street beyond breathed deeply of its perfume and turned to look.

"Oh, you beautiful!" cried Wanda again.

"All that you have given unto it, it will return to you again a thousand fold," said a quiet voice.

Wanda turned but there was nobody in sight.

Now in that far country where Wanda

"OH, YOU BEAUTIFUL!" CRIED WANDA

lived, the King's little son was very ill. Long days he lay upon his bed and neither spoke nor answered when he was spoken to. The court physicians and the wisest men of the land debated long upon his illness and what might be done to cure him. But always he lay quiet and listless with closed eyes and pallid face.

"He must be roused!" said the physicians. "If something can be found that will interest him, he will live."

So they searched through the country far and wide. They brought him rare and costly toys, they played for him beautiful music. They gathered from near and far all things new and wonderful, birds and pictures and the sweetest of sweet singers. But the little Prince heeded none of them and the Mother Queen bowed her head at his bedside and waited day after day.

"Go forth and seek still farther!" cried

the King. "Seek newer places for the strange, the wonderful, the unusual."

And farther and farther still went the seekers after that new thing that might rouse the little Prince. And so it happened one morning as Wanda stood by her lily, the court crier found her. The peal of his trumpet rang through the air as he spoke.

"In the name of the King, I summon you to appear before him. The Royal Prince is ill, and if it may be that your wonderful lily can rouse him, he will live."

And so it was that Wanda rode away with the court herald, the lily beside her, on and on and on to the palace where the little Prince lay with closed eyes and the Mother Queen with bowed head waited.

As Wanda came in through the door, the heart of the white lily seemed to grow still more golden and a fragrance, sweet beyond words, floated in and filled the room. The little Prince breathed more

deeply, his eyelids quivered, his fingers moved, and then he opened his eyes.

"What is it?" he asked in a whisper.

And when he saw the lily, he stretched out his hands and smiled. And Wanda smiled back and put the flower in his hands. Then the little Prince laid his cheek against it and smiled again.

It was the King who spoke first. "The half of my kingdom is yours," he said to Wanda. "Ask what you wish and it shall be granted."

But Wanda shook her head. "I have no wish," she said, "now that the little Prince is better."

And the Mother Queen put her arm around Wanda and smiled.

For many a day there was rejoicing in the kingdom. Far and wide the herald pealed his trumpet and far and wide went the glad tidings. "The Prince will live! The Prince will live!" And those who had

bowed their heads lifted them high and laughed. So was the whole kingdom glad once more. But no gladder one was there among them than Wanda as she played with the little Prince as the days passed. She watched the roses come back into his cheeks and the blue shine brighter in his eyes. And always the lily was with them, still golden and white.

"It doesn't seem to fade at all," said Wanda.

The little Prince was wise. "It will never fade," he said. "It is just like you. Its heart is as golden as the noonday sun and its face as white as the morning beams. It will sleep, but it will never fade."

And the words of the little Prince came true. Day after day the lily sent its fragrance through the house and garden and its white petals stayed unchanged. And then one morning, Wanda and the little Prince woke to find it gone from its

earthen box. All that was left was the dry brown bulb that the little wee man had first given Wanda. And as she bent to pick it up, a voice said close to her ear, "All that you gave to it, it has returned to you a thousand fold."

Wanda turned and there stood the little wee man. But before she could answer him, he bowed low before her. "I salute you, Little Sunshine Princess!" he said, and then he was gone.

And the little Prince laughed and clapped his hands, as he came toward her. Then he bent his knee and took Wanda's hand in his and smiled as he said, "I, too, salute you, Little Sunshine Princess!"

And through the garden gate came the King and the Mother Queen and all the ladies-in-waiting and the lords-in-attendance. All in a minute, it seemed, Wanda was seated in a golden chair with the little Prince beside her and the King was say-

ing, "Long life to our Little Princess Sunshine!"

And those who waited before the golden chair, bowed low and cried, "Long life to our Little Princess Sunshine!"

The little Prince held his head high and his laugh rang out clear and strong. "Long life to the Little Princess Sunshine!" he shouted, "and she is mine!"

Then he took Wanda by the hand and ran with her to the far end of the garden.

And Little Princess Sunshine she has been ever since. And though the brown bulb flowers every year into beautiful lilies, and though no country far or wide can boast so rare a blossom, yet the King and the Mother Queen and the little Prince do say that a thousand times more beautiful is their Little Sunshine Princess, whose heart is as golden as the sun of noonday and whose face is as the white beams of the morning.

At Grandpa's Farm

There was a great commotion in the barnyard at Grandpa's farm. The red rooster crowed: "Have you heard the news? Have you heard the news?" And the Plymouth Rock answered him.

"Ma-a-a," bleated the spotted calf to its mother.

"Yes, I know," mooed the red cow, "and I am just as glad as you are about it."

"Quack! quack! quack!" squawked the old duck to her ducklings. "This is the day of days for us."

"Th-th-s-s-s," hissed the geese. "We all know about it, too."

"Cheer! cheer! cheer!" sang a little finch. It was he who brought the news to the barnyard. He was singing in the tree by the window when he heard Grand-

mother tell it to Grandfather. And she read it in the letter the postman brought. Then little bird told it to the spotted calf. The spotted calf bleated it to the red cow. The red cow mooed it to the white geese and the waddling ducks. And the big brown drake, who was never known to keep a secret a minute, squawked it to the whole barnyard.

"Thomas is coming to-day to visit us!"

"Gobble, gobble, gobble!" sputtered the old turkey. "I like Thomas. His face is as freckled as my eggs."

"And he has a smile for every freckle," added the speckled hen. "I hope all my eggs hatch out into freckled children."

"Is everybody ready for Thomas?" asked the big sun, with his shiniest smile.

"Indeed and indeed we are!" mooed the red cow. "Is n't my richest cream waiting for him? And butter, too, as yellow as gold?"

"Good!" shined the old sun. "Your cream will go nicely with the red-cheeked peaches I am ripening for him."

"And don't forget us!" called the wheat-stalks from the field. "We gave the flour to make the bread your golden butter will be spread on."

"And I can just hear him laugh when he finds my tail feathers in the hedge," gobbled the turkey. "I put them there for him, to make an Indian feather piece."

"S-s-s," hissed the geese; "a coverlet of down from our breasts we gave him."

"I helped to make his feather pillow," cackled the speckled hen; "and wait till he tastes my eggs, freshly laid. There is a nest of them."

"I raised a family of ducklings for him to play with," quacked the old mother duck. "What more could one do for Thomas?"

"Wee-ee-ee," squealed the little pink

pig. "I am very little now, but when I am big I shall give him bristles from my back to make a hairbrush. I 'm going out now to watch for Thomas." And away he went so fast that he bumped his nose against the gardener.

"Don't you root around in my garden," shouted the gardener. "I am saving the nicest vegetables in the garden for Thomas. He is coming to visit us to-day."

"Here I am this minute!" said a merry voice, and — would you believe it? — there stood Thomas, and the old sun was shining right down on his freckles.

Little pig followed him to the barnyard squealing at the top of his shrill little voice, and shaking his little fat sides with joy.

I can't begin to tell you all the fun they had. If you had been anywhere near, you would have heard a happy little boy laughing and shouting, hens a-cackling, a wee

THE YELLOW GOSLINGS SWAM IN THE POND FOR HIM

calf bleating, turkeys gobbling, cows mooing, and a little piggy's squeal high above them all. Oh, it was a merry, merry day!

Grandmother made Thomas the Indian feather piece and he wore it all day long. You should have seen the old turkey strut around. She was so proud of Thomas and his feathers. The yellow goslings swam in the pond for him. "Do your best!" said their mother. And you may be sure they did, for Thomas clapped his hands and wished he could jump right in and swim with them.

The mother cat carried all her babies by the napes of their necks and put them down in front of Thomas. Then she washed them all clean with her rough tongue. The mother dog trailed all her romping puppies over the farm after him and Thomas shouted and played with them and tried to help them catch their tails.

I can't begin to tell you all the good things he had to eat. Of course there was the fresh bread, right out of the oven, and the butter to spread on it, yellow as gold. And there were eggs, freshly laid, and cookies from a stone jar, and the very nicest vegetables from the gardens and peaches and cream. And if there was a happier boy in all the world than Thomas, then I have never heard of him.

And when the day was over, and he was tucked in his own little bed under the down coverlet, with his head on the feather pillow, he said to his mother, "Oh, how I do love to visit a farm!"

And strange to say, just at that very minute, all the animals in the farmyard were going to bed, and they were saying: "Oh, how we do love to have Thomas visit us!"

The Three-Legged Stool

Once there was a little old man who lived in a little old house with his gentle wife. And most important of all, there lived with them a little three-legged stool. Now there are stools and stools, the world over, little and big; but this stool was not like any other stool in the world, as you will see. It might have been made by the Happy Elves, or blessed by the Fairy of Kind Deeds, or grown in the Forest of Loving Thoughts. I cannot tell you as to that. All I am sure of is this: it was the most wonderful stool I have ever heard of and it dwelt for many a year with the little old man and his gentle wife in the little old house on the hill.

Every morning the little old man carried it to the barn, sat down on it and

milked the brindled cow. Then he went back to the little old house with the milking-pail in one hand and the little three-legged stool in the other. One morning as he arose to go to the barn as usual, the little stool stirred on its three legs and said, "Why should I let you carry me to the barn every day when I am able to carry myself?"

"What's that?" said the little old man. But before he could say another word, the little stool danced away on its three legs and sat itself down by the brindled cow.

"Now that is very kind of you," said the little old man when he reached the barn.

"Not at all! Not at all!" replied the little stool. "I have n't had so much fun for a long time." So the little old man sat down and milked the brindled cow.

The next morning the stool said to the

milking-pail, as they stood side by side in the kitchen, "Why should you let the little old man carry you to the barn? Why not carry yourself?"

"A fine idea!" said the milking-pail.

"What's that?" inquired the little old man. But before he could say another word, off whisked the milking-pail with the little stool, and sat itself down under the brindled cow.

"Now that is very kind of you," said the little old man as he sat down to milk.

"Not at all! Not at all!" laughed the milking-pail. "I haven't had so much fun for a long time."

So the little old man milked the brindled cow and carried the milk to the house.

And the next morning the little stool got to thinking again, as she and the milking-pail waited by the brindled cow for the little old man to come.

"Oh, cow," said the little three-legged

stool, "why should you make the little old man milk you? He works hard all day long. Why not let down your milk yourself?"

"A fine idea!" smiled the cow as she chewed her cud. "A fine idea!" And when the little old man reached the barn, the pail was full of foamy milk.

"Now that was very kind of you, brindled cow," said the little old man.

"Not at all! Not at all!" answered the cow, switching her tail. "I haven't had so much fun in a long time."

And the little old man reached for the milking-pail to carry it into the house.

"Wait a minute!" called the little stool. "Why should the milking-pail and I let you carry the milk when between us we can take it to the house and not spill a drop?"

"What's that?" asked the little old man. But before he could take hold of the

milking-pail, it had jumped up on the stool. Tap! tap! went the three little legs, and in a minute they were safe in the house and not a drop spilled.

The little old man hurried in and told his gentle wife all about it. "We must do something for them in return for their kindness," said she. "Now do you give the brindled cow of our apples, and I will shine up the milking-pail and cover the little stool with red, red carpet."

"We have but few apples left for winter," said the little old man.

"That matters not," smiled his gentle wife. "We can do without ourselves."

So the brindled cow ate of the apples and the milking-pail, shining from top to toe, smiled at the little three-legged stool all covered with red, red carpet. Then the stool leaned over to the pail and said, "Why should the little old man toil day after day and get so little for his labor?"

"Why, indeed?" echoed the milking-pail.

"And why should we sit here in the corner all day while the little old man toils so hard? Let us bestir ourselves!"

"A fine idea!" the milking-pail answered.

"What's that?" asked the little old man.

"We go to seek your fortune!" cried the stool. But before the little old man could speak a word, away they both danced out the door and down the road and on to the village.

By the roadside sat a strong man.

"Why do you sit here?" asked the stool.

"Why, indeed?" echoed the milking-pail.

"The little old man toils hard day after day," the stool continued, "and gets but little for his labor."

"If that be so," answered the strong

man, rising, "take me to him! I will gladly work hard, too, in exchange for food and comfort."

"You shall drink your fill of my milk," promised the pail.

"And rest on me when you are weary," agreed the stool.

So they all journeyed back to the little old house.

"We bring you part of your fortune!" they told the little old man. "A strong pair of arms to labor for you in exchange for food and comfort."

"Now that is very kind of you," said the little old man.

"Not at all! not at all!" rejoined the stranger. "I have n't had so much fun in a long time."

And the little three-legged stool and the milking-pail laughed till they creaked, they were so happy.

"Your face grows shinier every day,"

whispered the stool to the milking-pail, a few days later.

"And your carpet face grows brighter and brighter," returned the pail. Then they laughed again.

"Why should we sit here in idleness," said the stool after a minute, "when the little old man and the strong man toil hard day after day? They are getting more for their labor, it is true, but yet not half enough. Let us bestir ourselves again."

"A fine idea!" said the milking-pail.

"What 's that?" questioned the little old man.

"We go again to seek your fortune," called the little stool, as it ran out the front door and down the road with the milking-pail after it.

On to the village they went, and once more they saw a man sitting by the road-side. A tattered coat covered his thin body and his face was white and pinched.

The shiny milking-pail and the little stool stopped to talk with him.

"Why do you sit here by the road-side?" asked the milking-pail.

"I am weary and hungry," returned the stranger, "and none will give me food."

"Why don't you go to the little old man's house?" suggested the little stool. "He has very little to give, but what he has he will gladly share with you and his gentle wife will care for you until you are well again."

"It may be," said the stranger, "that the little old man labors hard and has need of all he earns."

"Nevertheless, he will be glad to help you," the little stool assured him.

"You can drink your fill of my milk," said the pail.

"And rest on me when you are weary," added the stool.

So back again they journeyed to the little old man's house.

"We bring you no fortune this time," they called, "but only one who is weary and hungry and needs your help."

"And indeed I am glad to see you," smiled the little old man as he came to meet the stranger. And his gentle wife brought forward the easiest chair.

"Now this is very kind of you," began the stranger.

"Not at all! Not at all!" answered the little old man and his gentle wife together. "We have n't had so much fun for a long time."

And with that they brought the best from the cupboard and set it upon the table. And the stranger ate till he was satisfied, and when night came, he was given the softest bed for sleep and rest.

The morning came and the gentle wife prepared breakfast and put it on a tray

and put the tray on the little stool and tap! tap! tap! went the little stool up the stairs and into the stranger's room. And the little old man and his gentle wife followed.

The little stool sat itself down by the bedside. And the little old man and his wife stood by the door. And lo! There upon the bed, they saw, not a weary stranger, but a King with a jeweled crown upon his forehead.

"I was a hungered and you took me in, sheltered and fed me with the best you had," he said, "and a King does not forget."

Then the little old man and his gentle wife bowed low before the King.

"Nay," he said, "bow not to me, but sit you here by my side, and tell me what I can do for you who did so much for me."

But the little old man, sitting by the King's side, shook his head. And the gen-

tle wife, sitting on the other side of the King, shook her head. "We have done nothing," they said together. "It was the little stool that did it all."

And the King smiled. "Since you will not wish for yourself," he told them, "I shall wish for you." Then he lifted his hands above them.

"I bless you for always," he said, "with peace and happiness. And whatsoever your hands may touch shall prosper. And now, little stool"—the King turned around —"what can I do for you?"

"For me?" The little stool was so surprised he nearly tumbled over.

"For you," said the King, and he smiled again.

"Well, as to that," began the little stool, "if the strong man and the milking-pail and I can live always with the little old man and his gentle wife, we have nothing to wish for."

"Nothing at all?" asked the King. "Think!"

"Well," admitted the little stool with a laugh, "there is one thing we have often talked about, the strong man and the milking-pail and I. We should very much enjoy a little child about the house."

"For me to work for," said the strong man.

"To drink of my white milk," added the shiny pail.

"And to sit upon me," continued the little stool, creaking his legs with joy at the thought.

"Oh! oh! oh!" cried the little old man and his gentle wife. For there, right before them was a little child with yellow curls and blue eyes and cheeks like roses in June time. And she gave the little old man a kiss on his little left cheek, and his gentle wife a kiss on the right cheek.

Then she sat down on the little three-

legged stool with the red, red carpet on it. "May I have it for mine?" she asked.

And the little old man and his gentle wife nodded their heads and their eyes shone.

"And to think," said the little old man, "it was the little stool that brought it all to us."

"Not at all! Not at all!" cried the little stool, creaking with joy. "I have n't had so much fun for a long time."

Bobby's Mud-Pie Man

Bobby and Betty were making mud pies in the back yard. There was nice red clay there and it made the nicest kind of pies that you could roll out with a rolling-pin. Betty was six years old, but Bobby was only four. Nevertheless, he made just as round, trim pies as one could wish to see. Of course they made them just as Mother did, and they said, as they rolled them out, just what Mother said when they watched her making pies, —

"Round as the Moon a pie should be,
With eyes and nose and mouth, you see,
And good things, too, to make it sweet,
And fit for any king to eat."

Bobby yawned as he rolled out a very, very big pie.

It was past the children's nap-time. "Mine is a King Pie," he said, and he blinked his eyes sleepily.

Their mother came to the door. "It's nap-time, children," she called. "Come in and climb up on the bed. I am going to the store."

"Yes, Mother," they called back; and they both jumped up and put the mud pies out on a box in the sun to bake. Then Betty turned to go.

"I'll just watch them for a minute," said Bobby, "to be sure they do not burn." Then he yawned again and leaned against the chestnut tree.

"Don't you run away, Little Pies, till I come back," called Betty.

Bobby laughed. "Mud pies run away! How could mud pies run?"

He blinked his eyes as he heard Betty's shoes drop on the floor.

Then he laughed again. What a funny

BOBBY AND BETTY WERE MAKING MUD PIES

thing to say! Mud pies could n't run away. Of course they could n't.

"Why not?" said a strange voice from somewhere.

Bobby looked all around. There was nobody in sight.

"Why not, I say?" asked the same voice again.

"Oh, I don't know," said Bobby. "I guess because they have n't any legs or feet."

"No legs or feet?" The strange Somebody was laughing. "Just look!"

And then right before Bobby's very eyes, that biggest mud pie on the box thrust out his two legs with two feet on them.

Bobby opened his eyes wide. "I did n't know mud pies had feet," he said.

"Of course you did n't," said the Mud-Pie Man. "There are lots of things a little boy does n't know. Besides I did not have them until the sun grew them for me."

"The sun?" Bobby repeated.

"Of course the sun. Does n't the sun grow the flowers and put green in the leaves?"

"Yes," said Bobby.

The Mud-Pie Man stretched his legs. "They are strong enough to run with right now," he announced. And quick as a wink, he jumped down from the box, seized Bobby by the hand, and whisked him across the lawn through the front yard and down the street. Then he stopped a minute and squinted up at the sky. And all of a sudden it was not day any more. The moon was shining.

"Do you see any clouds around the moon?" asked the Mud-Pie Man. "I can't see very well. You gave me only one eye. But never mind. I 'll do the best I can with that. I am very grateful to you for making me. Are there any clouds around the moon?"

"No," said Bobby. "And I 'm sorry I gave you only one eye."

"It does n't matter," replied the Mud-Pie Man. "I can get along very well with this one. It will grow bigger. And, besides, I can have the head artist paint me a blue one when we get there. I am very fond of blue eyes."

"Oh!" said Bobby.

"Also, we are rather late," went on the Mud-Pie Man. "So come on. They are waiting for us. I can see that even with one eye."

"Who is waiting for us?" said Bobby.

"Why, the party, of course. A birthday party does n't begin till every one is there, does it?" The Mud-Pie Man looked at Bobby and smiled out of his one eye.

"I did n't know we were going to a party," Bobby replied.

"Of course you did n't," laughed the

Mud-Pie Man. "I did n't know it myself till a few minutes ago." Then he lifted Bobby up onto a moonbeam and away they sailed.

"I think it is lots of fun to go to a birthday party," said Bobby.

"So do I," answered the Mud-Pie Man, "and I am much obliged to you for giving me a birthday." And there they were at the big, big door of the moon.

The Moon Man himself opened it. He had little black, beady eyes and white whiskers, as long as Santa Claus's.

"Welcome to Moonland!" he shouted, as he shook hands with Bobby.

Then he bowed low to the Mud-Pie Man.

"Did you tell Bobby why you brought him here?" he asked.

"No," said the Mud-Pie Man; "I kept it for a surprise. Everybody enjoys a surprise."

From away back somewhere, a bell began to ring.

"Enter!" said the Moon Man. That was the way they talked in the story Mother read to Bobby the night before. He remembered it now.

The big moon door swung wider open and there in a long banquet hall was a well-set table with chairs of all sizes around it. Behind each chair stood a Mud-Pie Man. There were dozens of them. But not one of all the dozens was as big and fat and fine-looking as the one Bobby had made.

The Moon Man gave his arm a flourish and stepped behind a big chair. For you must know that the Moon Man is not little. "This is Bobby," he said to all the tableful of Mud-Pie Men. And every one of them, little and big and black and brown and gray, saluted the little boy in very grand fashion. The only thing Bobby

could think to say was "Thank you!" but he said it very bravely, though he felt rather strange with so many Mud-Pie Men all looking at him. Every one of them had two eyes, too. "I wish I had given my Mud-Pie Man two eyes," he thought again.

Then the Moon Man lifted Bobby's Mud-Pie Man up into a great gold chair and everybody stood very still. Even the clock stopped ticking.

"Have you decided what you will name him?" asked the Moon Man of Bobby.

Bobby thought a minute. The boy next door to him had a dog just the color of the Mud-Pie Man. "I'd like to call him 'Dubs.'" Bobby spoke very loud. All the tableful of Mud-Pie Men bowed their heads and said very softly and reverently, "Dubs, Dubs."

"You are his Godfather," said the

Moon Man, handing Bobby a small gold crown. Then he whispered something.

Bobby lifted the gold crown onto the Mud-Pie Man's head and said: "I crown you, Dubs, King of all the world of Mud-Pie Men."

"Hail! Hail!" said the tableful of Mud-Pie Men. "Hail to Dubs, King of all the world of Mud-Pie Men!"

Then they all sat down and ate bread and jam.

"I am very glad you made my mouth so big," said King Dubs. "I am very fond of bread and jam."

"So am I," replied Bobby. "My mother gives it to me for lunch nearly every day."

"I believe I hear some one calling you, Bobby," said the Moon Man, helping himself to some more jam.

"I think it must be my mother," said the little boy. "She wants me to take my nap."

"Of course," said King Dubs; "and now that you mention it, I feel like taking a nap myself." And he blinked his one eye at Bobby and smiled.

"I wish I had given you two eyes," Bobby said, looking very hard at King Dubs. And then — would you believe it — it was Mother's eyes that he was looking at, and he was not in the moon at all, but in his own yard.

"Why, Bobby," Mother was saying, "you have been sound asleep against the chestnut tree. What a funny place for a nap!"

Bobby rubbed his eyes and blinked them hard. Then he looked over at the box. There was the biggest Mud-Pie Man, and he looked as though he were asleep. Yes, he had only one eye. Bobby turned back to Mother.

"When King Dubs wakes up, I shall paint him another eye."

"Yes," said Mother. "What color do you think you will make it?"

"Why, blue, of course," smiled Bobby. "King Dubs is very fond of blue eyes."

The Secret

Pattie was very fond of fairy stories. If she had n't been, the lovely thing that came to her could never have come in the delightfully happy way it did. And this is the way it all began:

Mother was reading a story about the fairy wishing gate, and the story said, "A wishing gate, as every one knows, is made of two straight sticks. Just cross your fingers and you will see what a wishing gate looks like."

So, of course, Pattie crossed her fingers. "Here 's my wishing gate," she laughed.

Mother read on. "And to find the wishing gate, you must walk and walk till you come to it. Then if you climb upon it, and wish your wish, in the fairies' own good time it will come true. But if

you never find the wishing gate, you will know that wishing wishes on a fairy wishing gate is not for you."

Then the story went on to tell of a little girl who did find it, wished her wish, and in the fairies' own good time found it coming true.

"I am so glad she got her wish," Pattie said. "Only I should have wished for something much nicer than a doll."

"What?" asked Mother.

Pattie thought a minute. "There are so many things, Mother," she began. "If I could have only one wish, it would have to be something for Daddy and you and me all together. I should have to think a long time before I decided."

And right that very minute, Mother leaned over and whispered something — something that made Pattie dance up and down. "That is exactly what I should wish for, Mother!" she cried.

And, of course, the next morning, she walked and walked. Mother knew why she was walking and walking, and Bobs, the dog, was with her. Pattie crossed her fingers. "That is the way it will look," she said to herself. And she walked and walked and walked some more. Then Bobs gave a funny little bark. I do not know what he was barking at, but Pattie said she knew, for just when she looked up, she saw something that made her catch her breath and run fast. Folks called it a stile, but Pattie smiled and she climbed right up and wished her wish. It was a delightful wish, the happiest one you could imagine. If you know something that would make your mother and father and you the happiest people imaginable, then maybe you have guessed Pattie's wish. I can't tell you now what it was, but I can tell you that Pattie was too happy for words all the way home, and

BUT PATTIE SMILED AND SHE CLIMBED RIGHT
UP AND WISHED HER WISH

Bobs wagged his tail and barked as though he understood, too. Pattie ran into the house and told Mother all about it, and they decided, then and there, that it was a secret and must be told to no one.

"We will tell Daddy everything except the wish," smiled Pattie. And Mother agreed.

Daddy looked very much surprised when he heard about it. "H-m-m," he said, smoothing Pattie's hair, "so it is something nice for Mother and Father and little Pattie. Well, I hope it will hurry up and come true."

"Of course we all do," laughed Pattie, "but it is lots of fun thinking about it, too."

Now the little, cuddly, yellow chickens down by the barn began to notice how very, VERY happy Pattie was. "She dances all the time," they told their mother, "and she keeps singing to herself."

Bobs, the dog, smiled. "She has a secret," he told them all. "It is a wish that is coming true."

"How does she know that it is coming true?" asked the chicks.

"She wished it on the wishing gate. I was there when she did it," said Bobs, very proudly.

"Oh, then you know what she wished." All the little chickens pattered close to him. "Tell us!"

"Indeed, I do not know the wish." Bobs held his head up high. "Pattie is a girl who can keep a secret. She has n't even told her Daddy."

"Why, what can it be?" All the baby chicks twisted their little heads curiously. "Maybe she wished for a new doll buggy. We heard her say the old one was broken."

"Indeed she did not. She wished for something for her mother and father and herself all together," Bobs told them.

"What can it be?" the baby chicks said again. "Can you imagine, Mother?"

Mrs. Hen opened her eyes wide. "I am not going to try," she answered. "It is Pattie's secret." And she shut her bill tight.

"I wonder—" said one yellow chick to himself again.

And he was not the only one that was wondering. The roly-poly kittens in the barn noticed Pattie the first day they opened their eyes. "She is a very happy little child, Mother," they all said.

"She has reason to be," their mother told them. "She has a very happy secret that is coming true."

"Does she know that it is coming true?" they asked.

"Of course!" Mrs. Pussy was quite positive. "She wished it on the fairies' wishing gate, and in the fairies' own good time, it will come true."

"Did she wish for a new tea-set or a box of paints? She was playing with broken ones this morning."

"Indeed not! She wished for something that her mother and father and herself could enjoy all together," Mrs. Pussy told them, as she washed their faces.

"What do you suppose it is, Mother?" they asked.

"I don't suppose at all," said Mother Cat. "It is Pattie's secret."

But the little kittens kept on wondering.

Something else was wondering, too. The little waddling ducklings by the pond were talking about Pattie. "Her eyes grow brighter every day," they said one morning.

"No wonder," quacked Mrs. Duck. "Her secret is coming true."

All the little bills opened wide. "When?" they asked.

"In the fairies' own good time," said Mother Duck.

"Maybe she wished for a story book," they ventured. "She likes fairy stories."

"No, children," smiled Mrs. Duck. "She wished for something that her mother and father and she could enjoy together, but I do not know what the wish was."

"Can't you guess?" they inquired.

"I shall not try," she told them. "It is Pattie's secret. Come on now and have your swim."

It was while they were paddling around in the pond that Pattie came out wearing her little blue coat and her little blue hat and her very happiest smile.

"Good-bye, little ducks! Good-bye, little chicks! Good-bye, little kittens!" she called. "I am going to the city to visit Aunt Mary and my wish is coming true." And off she danced.

"Now we know! Now we know the wish!" cheeped all the little swimmers in the pond.

"Do you?" asked Mrs. Duck, with a smile, and she shook her wise head.

"Mother, did you hear?" peeped the baby chicks. "We have found out the secret."

"Have you?" inquired their mother, smiling. And she, too, shook her head.

Even Mrs. Pussy was smiling when her children called to her, "Mother, Pattie told us her secret!"

"Did she?" Mother Pussy asked it in a very funny way. Then she laughed.

"Well, if that is n't the secret, then what is it?" asked all the little chicks and all the little ducks and all the little kittens of their mothers.

"You will find out," smiled the three mothers.

It was three days after that when Pat-

tie came back, wearing the same little blue hat and the same little blue coat and the same happy smile. She ran right into the house as fast as she could go.

"Oh! oh! oh!" they heard her say, and then they heard her laugh and then they heard her sing. And last of all, they heard her say, "I am so happy!"

"The wish has come true," said everybody. "What can it be?"

"I know," Bobs told them. "They let me in the house this morning. But it is Pattie's secret so I will let her tell it."

"I know what it is," said a little chick; "it's a doll buggy!"

Bobs just stretched himself.

"I think it is a new dress," guessed a little black kitten.

"She wanted one," added a baby duckling.

"Be still, children!" the three mothers

said. "You can't guess it. You will have to wait and Pattie will tell you."

And of course she did. In fact Pattie brought it out to show them, with the help of Daddy, for it was too heavy for a little girl to carry. And when it was right there before their very eyes, Pattie said, "Look, Mother Hen and Mother Pussy and Mother Duck! We have a baby of our own, Mother and Daddy and I."

And you may very well believe that all the three mothers and all their many children did look at the wee-est little baby with eyes as blue as the sky and cheeks as soft as a rose petal.

"What a lovely secret!" said all the little ducks and all the little chicks and all the little kittens.

"The happiest secret in all the world!" said their mothers.

Piggywee's Little Curly Tail

Piggywee woke up one bright morning and squinted his little piggy eyes at his mother. "My tail does n't curl, does it?" he asked.

"No," said Mrs. Pig; "I 'm afraid it does n't."

"But I want it to," wailed Piggywee. "I like curly tails." And Piggywee began to cry.

"Hush, my child!" Mother Pig admonished. "Be thankful you have a tail at all. The bunnies do not have any, and they don't cry."

"I don't care," said Piggywee; "I want my tail to curl. Why does n't it?"

"How can I tell?" Mother Pig shook her head. "You had better ask Grandfather Owl. The children say he is very wise."

So Piggywee ran crying to the woods. "Grandfather Owl," he called, "why does n't my tail curl?"

"Who-oo-oo?" asked Grandfather Owl, opening his big eyes.

"Me, me, Piggywee! Why does n't my tail curl?"

"Tut! tut!" answered Mr. Owl. "How old are you, Piggywee?" And he screwed his head to one side and peered down at the little baby pig.

"I 'm five days old, Grandfather Owl," wailed little Piggywee, "and I want my tail to curl."

"Hm-m-m-m," said the wise bird in the tree. "Five days old and crying already."

Piggywee cried some more. "How can I help it, when my tail will not curl?" he asked.

The old Owl ruffled his feathers and closed one eye.

"Piggywee," he began gravely, "if you cannot make yourself stop crying, how can you expect to make your tail curl?"

"If I don't cry any more, will it curl?" asked little Piggywee.

"You never can tell," smiled Grandfather Owl, and he closed his other eye and went to sleep.

The next day Piggywee came back again. "Grandfather Owl," he called out in his happiest little squeal, "I don't cry any more. I am six days old and I have stopped crying. Now will my tail begin to curl?"

The old Owl popped out his big, staring eyes. "Six days old," he said, half to himself. "What have you been doing in those six days, anything besides eating and sleeping and crying?"

"No-o-o," admitted Piggywee.

"Well, well!" laughed Grandfather

Owl. "Six days old and you have done nothing but eat and sleep and cry. And still you expect your tail to curl." And Mr. Owl closed up one of his big eyes.

"If I do something better than eat and sleep and cry, will my tail curl?"

"You never can tell," smiled Grandfather Owl, and he closed his other eye and went fast asleep.

Little Piggywee walked home very slowly. "I must find something to do," he said to himself, "that is better than eating and sleeping and crying."

Just then Billy Boy passed him on the path. "Hello, Piggywee!" he called out.

"Hello!" said Piggywee. "How old are you, Billy Boy?"

"Me? I am six to-day." And Billy Boy held his head up high, and then he stooped and patted the little pig on his pink back. "How old are you, Piggywee?"

"I am six, too." But Piggywee looked

"HELLO, PIGGYWEE!" HE CALLED OUT

down at the ground as he said it. "What do you do, Billy Boy, besides eat and sleep and cry?" he asked.

How little Billy Boy did laugh! "Why, Piggywee," he said, "aren't you ashamed of yourself? You ought to know that I don't cry. Only babies cry, and a boy six years old does n't want to be a baby, does he?"

"No-o-o," admitted Piggywee. "I don't cry either, now. I used to, but I stopped it. But what do you do besides eat and sleep?"

"Oh, lots of things." Billy Boy stopped to think a minute. "I take care of my sister while Mother is busy, and I bring in wood for her, and I have a nice time playing and watching the birds build their nests. I laugh and I sing and run errands for my mother. Oh, there are hundreds of nice things to do. What do you do, Piggywee?"

But Piggywee was ashamed to tell, and he ran home as fast as his little piggy legs could carry him.

And the next morning he went back to Grandfather Owl.

"Grandfather Owl! Grandfather!" he called. "I do lots of things now besides sleep and eat!"

Grandfather Owl squinted his blinking eyes. "Well, well!" he said, looking down. "So here is little Piggywee back again. And what are the lots of things you do besides eat and sleep?"

Piggywee laughed loud and hard, and his little fat sides shook. "The very jolliest things I do, Grandfather Owl. I take care of my brothers and sisters when my mother goes to the woods, and I carry home acorns for her, and I play around and laugh and squeal and grunt and have a good time all day. To-morrow I am going to help the farmer shoo the chickens

out of the garden, and he is going to let me follow him up and down the rows in the corn-field and root up the big lumps. It will be lots of fun." And off ran Piggywee, laughing and shaking his little fat sides and so happy that he forgot all about his tail not curling. And Grandfather Owl ruffled his brown feathers and winked one eye and smiled.

Days passed by ,and, though Grandfather Owl waited in the big oak tree and wondered, no Piggywee came back to ask why his tail did not curl. "I wonder what that funny little pig is doing," said the wise old owl to himself one merry, merry morning. So with a hoot and a flap of his wings, off went Mr. Owl to the gnarled tree by the side of the farmer's corn-field. There was the farmer going up and down the rows of tasseled corn and trotting after him with many a merry squeal was little Piggywee.

"To-hoo! To-hoo!" called Grandfather Owl.

Piggywee came running. "Oh, Grandfather Owl," he declared as he trotted up close to the tree, "I've been having the best fun. I have n't even had time to come down and tell you about it. The farmer says I am the biggest helper he has." And Piggywee laughed and squealed as happily as though the whole world were having a gala day. Nobody would ever have guessed that he had sighed and cried and whined and pined because his little tail would not curl.

"Having a good time, are you?" smiled the wise old owl.

"Oh, such a good time!" Piggywee told him. "Is n't the corn beautiful with its silk tassels? And is n't this a lovely world, so full of happy things to do?"

"Yes, yes!" agreed the old owl, "it

certainly is. But what's that I see way at the end of your back?"

Piggywee twisted his little fat side around and he twisted his little fat head around, and all of a sudden he saw what Grandfather Owl saw — what do you suppose? — why, there was his little pink tail all curled up.

How he did squeal! "Why," he said, "I've been having such a good time that I forgot all about my tail. When do you suppose it began to curl?"

"You never can tell," said the wise old owl.

Just then the farmer started down a new row of corn. "Good-bye!" called Piggywee, and off he trotted after him, his little squinty eyes almost shut up with smiles.

"Rustle! rustle! rustle!" went the silk-tasseled corn.

And "Wiggle! wiggle! wiggle!" went little Piggywee's curly tail.

Grandfather Pig's Spectacles

Little Red Hen was pattering along the path with her little yellow feet when she noticed Grandfather Pig's house. The curtains were all down and the door was shut.

"Well, well!" said Little Red Hen, and she pattered right up to the door.

"Grandfather Pig, are you within?" she called.

And a gruff voice answered, "Yes, Little Red Hen, I am within, and likely to stay there too, for I have lost my spectacles."

"Lost your spectacles! Where?" asked Little Red Hen.

"Somewhere in the world," the pig answered. "I had them on when I took my twilight walk, but when I came home and pushed back my green cap, the

better to see the keyhole, they were gone."

"I am so sorry," Little Red Hen told him; "but you come out, Grandfather Pig, and lie under the apple tree, and I'll hunt for them."

"Come out without my spectacles!" Grandfather Pig gave a grunt. "I can never go into the light again until I find them."

"I 'll hurry," said Little Red Hen, and patter, patter, patter, went her little yellow feet, here and there and everywhere. And Grandfather Pig waited in his little house with the curtains all down and the door closed.

And Little Red Hen, as smart as she is,
(And some folks say she's a little "wiz")
Searched high and low and low and
high,
But not a spectacle could she spy.

"Never mind," said the old pig. "If you will just go down and tell my grandchildren about it, they will be glad to look for them."

So patter, patter, patter went Little Red Hen's yellow feet until she came to the house of Mrs. Pig and her eight little pink piggies.

"Grandfather Pig has lost his spectacles!" she cried, "and he cannot go out in the light until he finds them."

"Lost his spectacles!" said Mrs. Pig and the eight little piggies. "Where?"

"Somewhere in the world. He had them on when he took his twilight walk, but when he came home and pushed back his green cap, the better to see the keyhole, they were gone."

"We can find them," said the eight little pink piggies, and trot, trot, trot, went their little pink legs, here and there and nearly everywhere.

But though they looked every place they knew,
Over, around it, and under it, too,
They found no spectacles, little or big,
That seemed to belong to Grandfather Pig.

Mrs. Pig thought a minute. "The turkey wanders far by day, and climbs high in the trees by night," she said. "Maybe she could find them."

So patter, patter, patter, and trot, trot, trot, went Little Red Hen and Mrs. Pig and the eight little pink piggies, till they came to Mrs. Turkey and her brood of little turkeys.

"Grandfather Pig has lost his spectacles!" they all cried. "And he cannot go out in the light till he finds them."

"Shocking!" exclaimed Mrs. Turkey. "Where did he lose them?"

"Somewhere in the world," they told

her. "He had them on when he went for his twilight walk, but when he came home and pushed back his green cap, the better to see the keyhole, they were gone."

"We will do our best to find them," said Mrs. Turkey as she shook her red wattles. "Come on, children!"

And step, step, step, went the legs of Mrs. Turkey and all the little turkeys, here and there and nearly everywhere.

They searched the farm in field and nook
And every place where eye could look,
But though they stretched and craned
their necks,
They simply could not find those "specs."

"There goes Mr. Barnswallow, eating his way through a swarm of gnats!" cried Little Pink Piggie. "He is up high in the world and sees a great deal. He might be able to find them."

So patter, patter, patter, and trot, trot, trot, and step, step, step, went Little Red Hen, and Mrs. Pig and the eight little pink piggies, and Mrs. Turkey and her brood of little turkeys, till they came to Mr. Barnswallow.

"Oh, Mr. Barnswallow!" they called, "Grandfather Pig has lost his spectacles and cannot go out in the light till he finds them."

"My!" Mr. Barnswallow said as he hopped along the ground to meet them. "Where did he lose them?"

"Somewhere in the world," they all answered. "He had them on when he went for his twilight walk, but when he came home and pushed back his green cap, the better to see the keyhole, they were gone."

"I know where Grandfather Pig takes his twilight walks," said Mr. Barnswallow. "I 'll just hop around on the ground

and dart about in the air and do my best to find them."

And hop, hop, hop, went Mr. Barnswallow's little legs.

But though he used his brightest eyes,
In every place a swallow flies,
And searched with all his swallow might,
Those spectacles were not in sight.

Then Little Red Hen had a sudden thought. "If any one can find them, Little Boy's puppy dog can. He finds everything."

So patter, patter, patter, and trot, trot, trot, and step, step, step, and hop, hop, hop, went Little Red Hen, and Mrs. Pig and the eight little pink piggies, and Mrs. Turkey and her brood of little turkeys, and Mr. Barnswallow, till they came to Little Boy's puppy dog.

"Oh, Puppy Dog!" they cried out, "Grandfather Pig has lost his spectacles

and cannot go out in the light till he finds them."

"Poor Grandfather Pig!" said Puppy Dog. "Where did he lose them?"

"Somewhere in the world," they told him. "He had them on when he went for his twilight walk, but when he came home and pushed back his green cap, the better to see the keyhole, they were gone."

"Grandfather Pig goes a long way for his twilight walk," said Little Puppy Dog. "My master, Little Boy, has sharper eyes than I when he wants to use them, but as he is not here I'll do my best to find the spectacles. In fact I think I know where they are right now. I played with spectacles this very morning."

And head over heels went Little Puppy Dog, tumbling down the path to get the spectacles.

And tumbling back in just a minute,
His puppy mouth had something in it,

And spectacles, just as you thought,
Was what that little puppy brought.

"I knew Puppy Dog could find them!" cried Little Red Hen. "He has the sharpest eyes in the world."

"No, indeed!" answered Puppy Dog, biting his tail. "The sharpest eyes in the world belong to my master, Little Boy. But I do the best I can. Let's go and surprise Grandfather Pig."

So patter, patter, patter, and trot, trot, trot, and step, step, step, and hop, hop, hop, and tumble, tumble, tumble, went Little Red Hen, and Mrs. Pig and the eight little pink piggies, and Mrs. Turkey and her brood of little turkeys, and Mr. Barnswallow, and Little Boy's puppy dog.

"Oh, Grandfather Pig!" they cried, "Little Boy's puppy dog has found your glasses, and now you can come out in the light."

And Grandfather Pig opened the door a wee little bit and took the glasses, and felt of them. "Ah me! Ah me!" he wailed. "They are n't mine at all. My glasses have horn rims." And he shut the door.

Puppy Dog pricked up his ears. "I hear a whistle!" he told them.

And just then up came Little Boy.

"Oh, Little Boy!" they all called to him, "Grandfather Pig has lost his spectacles, and cannot go out in the light till he finds them."

"I 'm sorry," said Little Boy. "Where did he lose them?"

"Oh, somewhere in the world. He had them on when he went for his twilight walk, but when he came home and pushed back his green cap, the better to see the keyhole, they were gone."

Grandfather Pig opened the door a wee little crack. "Please find my spectacles, Little Boy," he called.

And just that minute a big gust of wind came and blew Grandfather Pig's door wide open. Little Boy ran quickly to shut it for him, for Grandfather Pig was blinking his eyes.

"Please find my spectacles for me, Little Boy," he cried again.

Then Little Boy gave a wee little peek,
And laughed till the tears rolled down his cheek.
"Come out!" he said, "and have no fears!
Your spectacles are behind your ears!"

And Grandfather Pig felt, and sure enough there they were.

"Thank you, Little Boy," he laughed, "they must have slipped there when I pushed back my green cap, the better to see the keyhole."

Little Puppy Dog tumbled over again. "Didn't I tell you," he barked, "that

Little Boy had the sharpest eyes in the world?"

Then they all laughed, and patter, patter, patter, and trot, trot, trot, and step, step, step, and hop, hop, hop, and tumble, tumble, tumble, off they went home again.

The Adventures of Ducky Widdle-Waddle and Fishy Flip-Flop

Ducky Widdle-Waddle swam across the blue lake and pushed his way through the reed rushes on the bank. He did not even look back at the little fishes as he waddled over the green grass. "I'm tired of the pond," he said. "I'm tired of swimming around and waddling on the grass. I want to have some fun. Other folks have lots of fun, but I don't."

"Neither do I," said a voice close by. Ducky Widdle-Waddle looked back and there was Fishy Flip-Flop looking at him from the water. "I'm tired of this lake, too," asserted Fishy Flip-Flop. "I'm tired of flipping up in the air and flopping back again. The whole world has a better time than I do."

"Then," said Ducky Widdle-Waddle,

"let's go out in the whole world and have some fun, and let's not come back till we find the happiest place in it."

"All right," answered the fish, and with a flip and a flop out on the grass she came.

Now the first person they saw was Robin Chirp-Chirp. He was hopping along the grass in the meadow, looking for worms and singing, "Chirp! Chirp!"

"What a lot of fun he is having!" cried Fishy Flip-Flop. "Let us go and have some fun with him!"

So Fishy Flip-Flop stood up on his two front fins and Ducky Widdle-Waddle spread out his yellow web feet and they followed after Robin Chirp-Chirp. And such a commotion did they make that Robin Chirp-Chirp stopped.

"My!" he cried, "what funny sound is that?" And he dropped the worm that he held in his mouth and turned around.

When he saw Ducky Widdle-Waddle and Fishy Flip-Flop, how he did laugh! "What a pair of sillies!" he said to himself. "Did you ever see anything so funny in your life?" And he laughed some more. "What are you folks trying to do?" he asked.

"Oh," said Fishy Flip-Flop, "we are just trying to hop around on the grass and hunt for worms and sing 'Chirp! Chirp!' the same as you do."

Then Robin Chirp-Chirp laughed and laughed and laughed till it seemed as though he never would stop.

"What are you trying to do that for?" he asked.

"Just to have some fun," said Fishy Flip-Flop.

"Well, well, well!" said Robin Chirp-Chirp, and he laughed again so hard and long that his feathers stood up straight.

"You seem very merry," said Ducky

Widdle-Waddle. "Is this the happiest place in the world?"

"The happiest place in the world!" repeated Robin Chirp-Chirp. "I should say it was n't. But" — and he gave his tail a merry little flirt — "the happiest place in the world is n't far from here." And away he flew.

"My front fins are nearly broken in two," said Fishy Flip-Flop; "my throat is hoarse trying to sing like a robin."

Ducky Widdle-Waddle gave a squawk. "Who wants to sing 'Chirp! Chirp!' all day? Not I," he said. "But if the happiest place in the world is not far from here, then let us go on and find it." So with a flip and a flop and a widdle and a waddle, on they went.

They had not gone very far when they met Puppy Yap-Yap. He was rolling and tumbling on the grass and barking and trying to catch his little tail.

"What a lot of fun he is having!" cried Fishy Flip-Flop. "Come on, Ducky Widdle-Waddle! Let us go and have a good time with him!"

So they left their flip and their flop and their widdle and their waddle and they followed after Puppy Yap-Yap. But such a funny commotion did they make that Puppy Yap-Yap stopped his romping to listen.

"What a funny sound I hear!" he said to himself. And he turned around. Then how he did laugh, when he saw them. "Such a pair of sillies!" he told himself. "Did you ever see anything so funny in your life?" And he laughed some more. "What are you folks trying to do?" he questioned.

"Oh," said Ducky Widdle-Waddle, "we are just trying to roll and tumble on the ground and catch our tails and say, 'Yap! Yap!' the same as you do."

"What are you doing that for?" asked the puppy.

"Just to have some fun," said Fishy Flip-Flop.

"Well, well, well!" said Puppy Yap-Yap, and he laughed and laughed till his tail stood straight up in the air.

"You seem very gay," said Ducky Widdle-Waddle. "Is this the happiest place in the world?"

"I should say not," laughed Puppy Yap-Yap, "but the happiest place in the world is not far from here." And he gave his long ears a shake and off he trotted.

"I don't think it is any fun to tumble around after your own tail," said Fishy Flip-Flop.

"Nor to sing 'Yap! Yap!' all day long," added Ducky Widdle-Waddle. "But if the happiest place in the world is not far from here, let us go and find it."

So with a flip and a flop and a widdle and a waddle, off they went.

Now they had not gone very far when they saw Piggy Squealer. He was rooting around in the field and wiggling his little curly tail and squealing with all his piggy might.

"Oh, see Piggy Squealer!" cried Fishy Flip-Flop. "He is having the most fun in the world. Let us go and have some fun with him!"

So they left their flip and their flop and their widdle and their waddle and they followed after Piggy Squealer. And they tossed the dirt so high and made such a commotion that the pig stopped rooting.

"What funny noise is this that I hear?" asked Piggy Squealer. And he turned around. And when he saw what he saw, he laughed and laughed. "What a pair of sillies!" he exclaimed. "Did you

ever see anything so funny in your life?" And then he asked them, "What are you folks trying to do?"

"Oh," said Fishy Flip-Flop, "we are just trying to root around in the ground and wiggle our tails and squeal the same as you do."

"What are you doing that for?" asked Piggy Squealer.

"Just to have some fun," answered Ducky Widdle-Waddle.

"Well, well, well!" said Piggy Squealer, and he laughed so hard that his little tail curled up tight.

"You seem very merry," Ducky Widdle-Waddle said. "Is this the happiest place in the world?"

"I should say not," Piggy Squealer answered. "But the happiest place in the world is not far from here." And giving his tail another little wiggle, off he trotted.

"It is n't any fun to wiggle your tail all day, and root in the ground," said Fishy Flip-Flop.

"And who wants to squeal till his throat is hoarse?" added Ducky Widdle-Waddle. "But if the happiest place in the world is not far away, let us go and find it."

So with a flip and a flop and a widdle and a waddle, off they went again.

Now as they went slowly on their way, they saw Mr. Buzzy-Bee. He was dangling his legs in a hollyhock, sucking out the honey and buzzing with all his busy might.

"See what a good time Mr. Buzzy-Bee is having!" cried Fishy Flip-Flop. "Let us go and have some fun with him!"

So once again they left their flip and their flop and their widdle and their waddle and they followed after Mr. Buzzy-

Bee. But alas and alack! when they tried to dangle themselves in the flowers, over tumbled the hollyhock stalk, Ducky Widdle-Waddle, Fishy Flip-Flop, Mr. Buzzy-Bee and all.

"What are you folks trying to do?" asked Buzzy-Bee as he rolled out of the dust.

"Oh, we are just trying to dangle ourselves in the hollyhocks, and suck out the honey, and sing 'Buzz! Buzz!' the same as you do," said Ducky Widdle-Waddle.

"What are you doing that for?" asked the Bee.

"Just to have some fun," Fishy Flip-Flop told him.

"Did you ever hear of anything so funny in your life?" laughed the bee to himself, and he kept on laughing till his buzzer would not go any more.

"You seem very merry," Fishy Flip-

Flop said to him. "Is this the happiest place in the world?"

"No, indeed!" said Buzzy-Bee very emphatically. "But the happiest place in the world is not far from here." And dangling his legs some more, off he flew.

"I am tired of dangling myself in flowers and singing other people's songs," said Fishy Flip-Flop.

"And I am tired of saying 'Buzz! Buzz!'" replied Ducky Widdle-Waddle. "It makes me dizzy."

Just then there came to them the sound of music. "Some one is singing," cried Fishy Flip-Flop. "And it is Little Girl Happy."

And sure enough it was. They could see her sitting on the doorstep of her own little home. And this is what she was singing:

"Time to work and time to rest,
Each one in his place is best.

THEY COULD SEE HER SITTING ON THE DOORSTEP
OF HER OWN LITTLE HOME

Though afar we like to roam,
The happiest place is always home,
Yours for you and mine for me,
The happiest place is home."

Ducky Widdle-Waddle looked at Fishy Flip-Flop, and Fishy Flip-Flop looked at Ducky Widdle-Waddle and they laughed and laughed and laughed.

"Aren't we a pair of sillies!" said Fishy Flip-Flop.

"I never heard of anything so funny in my life," answered Ducky Widdle-Waddle.

And they laughed some more, and then, with a flip and a flop and a widdle and a waddle, off they went. And the last time I heard anything about them they were both swimming merrily around in their own blue lake, singing to themselves. If you had been close to the water's edge, and understood the lan-

guage of a duck and a fish, you would have heard these words:

"Time to work and time to rest,
Each one in his place is best.
Though afar we like to roam,
The happiest place is always home,
Yours for you and mine for me,
The happiest place is home."

The Two Little Maple Leaves

Once there were two little leaves that grew side by side in the top of a tall maple tree. They were green as green could be. Their stems were green and the branch on which they lived was green, as green as the violet bed at the maple tree's roots. Every morning the sun wakened the two little leaves and every night the cool dark put them to sleep, and day after day they swung on the topmost branch of the tree.

"We shall always play together here," they said to each other.

"Always?" asked a little bluebird.

"Always," said the little leaves.

"Not quite always," said the old maple tree. "When fall comes, you will put on your winter dresses. Maple leaves never wear green dresses in the fall. The North

Wind comes with his chariot and you will sail away with him for a merry ride. Then you will rest in a new Sleepyland and Father Winter will tuck you in bed beneath a white coverlet of snow."

But the little leaves only laughed. "We like our green dresses best," they said, "and we do not care to ride with the North Wind." And they swung faster than ever in the sunlight.

Days passed. The flowers closed their eyes and seed pods nodded from the blossom stems. Fall days crept in and one by one the maple leaves all took off their green summer dresses and put on russet and crimson and golden ones. The maple tree was aflame with color.

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried the children who passed by, "the maple tree looks like a flower garden in the springtime. But see those two little leaves in the top! They have forgotten to take off their summer

dresses. Little Leaves," they called, "are n't you going to the North Wind's party?" But the little leaves only smiled and went on dancing.

Autumn swept over the land and the days grew chill. The little leaves drew their summer clothes more closely about them and shivered a little.

The big brown tree shook her branches and called to them.

"All the world knows," she said, "how a maple leaf should dress in autumn. Put on your winter clothes. The air is growing colder."

"It will be warmer by and by," smiled the little leaves.

And then one day came the big, blowy, North Wind.

His breath stung the cheeks of the two little leaves and tingled their toes till they ached and sent a sharp chill piercing through them.

"All ready!" he called. "Button your crimson coats tighter, my leaves, and fasten your brown dresses close. Tie your golden scarfs around your heads and put on your yellow mittens! We are off for a merry ride!"

One by one he lifted them into his chariot, the little and the big, the red, the brown, the gold, and the russet leaves. Oh, there was a load of them, and how they laughed and shouted and sang as they climbed in. For the merriest day in the long, long year for them was the North Wind's gala day.

The two little leaves were left in the topmost branch all alone.

"Take us! Take us!" they cried, as the North Wind climbed in.

"In faded summer clothes?" asked the North Wind. "Nay, none ride with me but those who are robed for winter." And with a whistle and a shout he was off.

And the two little leaves hung in the tree-top, cold and tired and sad.

"Poor little children!" said the maple tree, as she looked up at them.

"Poor little children!" said the North Wind to himself, as he rode along, for he, too, was sorry. Then he stopped a little breeze that was blowing past. "Hurry to the maple tree," he said. "Two little leaves hang in the topmost branch in their faded summer dresses. They are cold and tired. Take them down to the violet bed and tuck them in."

And so it happened that the little leaves let go their hold on the top branch and found themselves slowly sinking, down, down —

"Good-night!" called the bare brown tree.

"Good-night!" said the two little leaves. Then they shut their eyes, for Mother Nature was hushing them to sleep.

Little Water-Drop's Journey

One golden morning in summer, a little drop of water out in the ocean climbed up on top of a foamy wave and began to cry.

"Well, well, well!" said the big Sun. "What can a little drop of water be crying about?"

"Lots of things," said the little drop. "I'm tired of splashing about. I want to have some fun."

"Is n't it fun scattering shells all over the beach, and playing with the little children and tickling their toes?"

"That's just it," sighed the little drop of water. "That is just what I like to do, but a big wave always comes and takes me away, and then the tide will not let me go back for a whole day." And the little drop of water began to cry again.

"I see! I see!" smiled the big Sun.

Then he slipped behind a little cloud to think. When he came out again, his smile was very warm.

"How would you like to go for a ride with your old Grandfather Sun?" he asked.

"And see the world?" asked the little drop.

"And see the world," he assented. "But — you must be very good and do as you are told, for that is the only way a rain-drop can see the world."

"I'll do it!" she promised.

"All right." Grandfather Sun smiled warmer and warmer. "Now keep very still for a moment. I shall have to change you into a vapor fairy and put wings on you."

Hardly were the words out of his mouth than the little drop felt herself growing lighter. She seemed to spread out and a strange feeling stole over her.

"Where am I?" she cried. "I can't see myself!"

"Of course not," smiled Grandfather Sun. "Nobody can see a vapor fairy. Spread your wings now and fly up on a sunbeam and come along!"

And that was the way Little Water-Drop started out to see the world.

"I hope I shall see little children," she said, after they had sailed a long way up in the sky. "I like to play with little children."

"You will have lots of happy times with lots of little children in lots of different places before you get home again," said Grandfather Sun. "For seeing the world is a long journey. And now good-bye! Uncle West Wind is going to take you to a party with a lot of other vapor fairies."

"A party!" Water-Drop clapped her hands. But before she had time to say any more, up came Uncle West Wind.

"Well, well, well!" he said as he blew a little kiss to her. "Another little drop of water going out to see the world! My party is growing very big."

"Where is the party?" Water-Drop asked.

Uncle West Wind took hold of her hand. "It is up in that silver cloud that looks very close to the moon, but is n't," he laughed, as he whisked her away.

"What do we do at a cloud party?" asked the little drop.

"Oh, you dance and sing and fly around and guess guesses and wish wishes until the big surprise comes."

"Oh!" said Little Water-Drop, "I love big surprises!"

"So do the other vapor fairies," returned her uncle. "That is why they guess guesses about it."

"What is the big surprise?" Water-Drop asked before she thought. Then she

clapped her hand over her mouth. "Don't tell me!" she cried.

How Uncle West Wind did laugh. "How can I tell you when I do not know myself?" he said. "Your four uncles, North Wind and South Wind and East Wind and myself, decide the matter in council. Then one of us goes to the party and tells the big surprise. But, of course, you may guess guesses and wish wishes about it."

And just that minute he lifted Water-Drop right up on the edge of the silver cloud. Hundreds of little vapor fairies came flying out to meet her. You can imagine how happy she was and what a merry time she had. They danced dances she had never heard of before and played games that only vapor fairies could think of. And they spoke often in whispers of the big surprise. "What can it be? What can it be?" they asked over and over. By

and by, it grew colder and they danced closer together.

"I 'm shivering," said Little Water-Drop. "Let 's sit down and guess guesses and wish wishes."

And that was just what everybody wanted to do. And when all the many little vapor fairies had guessed and wished to their little hearts' content, Water-Drop said: "Is n't it lovely to see the world! I wish I might fly over to that purple mountain-top and play with the little children!"

Then they all laughed. "Why, there are no little children on that high mountain," they told her.

"Then I should run down the side till I found them," she announced.

"Yoo-oo-oo-oo!" Everybody stopped to listen. They had all heard that sound before. "Why, it must be Uncle North Wind!" they all cried.

"Yoo-oo-oo!" And there he was. And every little vapor fairy felt as though she were shrinking. "Yoo-oo-oo!" he whistled once more.

"Did you bring the big surprise?" they all cried, as they shivered again.

"Whee-ee-ee!" hummed Uncle North Wind, puffing hard. "Of course I brought the big surprise. You are all going to visit the purple mountain."

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" said Water-Drop. "My wish is coming true."

"Yoo-oo-oo!" whistled Uncle North Wind. "Hurry up! Cuddle up close! It will be a cold ride, but you will soon be there." And with a bluster and a puff and a whistle and a roar, he carried the whole cloud of fairies away.

The purple mountain with her face covered with haze saw them coming. She was so happy that she grew more purple still and seemed mistier than ever.

"I have waited a long time for you, little vapor fairies," she called. "Your little nightie-caps were ready for you weeks ago. Six points I have embroidered on every one, and no two caps alike. Here it is November and not a single one of you asleep yet."

"Do we have to go to sleep?" asked Little Water-Drop.

"Why, of course." Purple mountain was shaking out hundreds of little white nightie-gowns. "No one travels all the time. First a little journey and then a little rest, and then a little journey. That is the way to see the world."

"Of course," laughed all the little vapor fairies. And Water-Drop knew right down in her little water-drop heart that she was as sleepy as she could be. It was all she could do to count the six points on the nightie-caps the purple mountain was handing out to them. Oh, they were such

cute little caps! Ever so much prettier than the ones the waves wore. And when Water-Drop put hers on she was so surprised.

"Why, I can see myself again!" she cried. "I am all white now."

So were all the other vapor fairies. And when they all lay cuddled down against the purple mountain, they looked like a fairy garden of stars.

Water-Drop was so fast asleep that she did not even hear the little children talking down in the valley below.

They were looking up at the flower garden of stars.

"Oh, see the purple mountain!" they shouted. "It is all covered with snow!"

She was so fast asleep that she did not even feel Jack Frost pinching her cheeks and tickling her toes and nipping her nose. She did not even know that King Winter was ruling the land. She was still

fast asleep when Spring came and chased King Winter away. But all of a sudden, one merry morning, she opened her eyes. And who do you suppose it was that wakened her? Why, Grandfather Sun, of course. "Well, well, well!" he was saying. "Here we are again. And how do you like the world, now that you have seen something of it?"

Water-Drop sat up in bed. "I think it is a wonderful place," she said. She was growing warmer and warmer — so warm that she loosened her nightie-cap and pushed it back a little way. Then she laughed.

"I know what you are going to do, Grandfather Sun," she began, shaking her finger at him. "You are going to change me into a vapor fairy again."

"You have guessed wrong," Grandfather Sun laughed. "I can do other things besides turning water-drops into

vapor fairies. Keep very still for a minute, now, and see what happens."

Water-Drop almost held her breath. She felt as warm as little children do when they say they are nearly melting, and then, all of a sudden, her little cap and nightie were gone, and there she was, her own old self — a water-drop again.

"Nobody wears a nightie-gown and a nightie-cap when he travels around to see the world," laughed the old Sun.

"I look just the same as I used to," Water-Drop told him, "but I feel different. I seem to be lighter than I was when I splashed on top of the waves."

"Ah, yes." The old Sun was nodding his head. "That is because you are not carrying the little bag of salt you played with in the ocean. You dropped it when you changed into a vapor fairy, but you will find it again. And now I suppose

you will want to start on your journey, child, so good-bye! I just stopped a minute to wake you all up and say 'Happy voyage!'"

When Water-Drop looked around, sure enough, all the nightie-gowns and caps were gone, and there were lots of little water-drops like herself scampering about. "Come on! Come on!" they all cried, and they joined hands and ran down the mountain-side. "Good-bye!" they called, "and thank you for a happy visit, Purple Mountain!"

They had a merry race and the first thing Water-Drop knew, so many others had joined them that they made a tiny little stream of water curving its way over the pebbles and dirt. "See how big we are growing!" they all cried, as other little streams hurried from different directions to catch up with them. "Let's all go on together and see the world!" They

called out their invitation to all the water-drops they could see. And every little drop that could possibly run there joined in with the merry little party going on to see the world. And the next thing Water-Drop knew they had splashed right into a big brook.

"Glad to see you!" he said, welcoming them with a gurgle. "Come right on with me! I'll show you lots of interesting things." And he did, too. I can't begin to tell you how many — trees and bushes and big rocks and flowers and water-cresses and nesting birds and meadows, and children — oh, so many children! They found them in the woods, they met them in the meadow, and they played with them down in the cowslip pasture. There were brown-eyed children and blue-eyed children, children with yellow curls and brown ones. "I did not know there were so many children in the

world!" said Water-Drop as she danced on and on.

Sometimes she splashed up on the back of a green bull-frog and looked up at the trees and the birds. Sometimes she rested in the little pools and talked to the fishes. Sometimes she went to sleep on a water-cress leaf. But always the brook was in a hurry. "Come on!" he kept calling. "If you want to see the world, come on!"

"Good-bye, lovely things!" called Water-Drop, and she said it over and over all day long. "Good-bye, little children!"

"There is a river farther down," said the brook. "You will like the river. It is so big and splashy and it has ripples all over it. When the steamers go by, the ripples are big and white almost like the waves of the ocean."

"Oh!" said Little Water-Drop, and she

wished right that minute that she could see a little white ocean-wave, but then she remembered that there were more lovely things to see in the world, so she danced on.

And when at last they came to the big river, both she and the brook were so happy that they splashed right in. "Glad to see you! Glad to see you!" boomed the big river. And then he splashed all over a little boat that was filled with children.

"My! How happy the river must be!" laughed all the little folks. "He has splashed all over us." And they shook all the little water-drops off of their dresses and laughed some more.

"Wait till you get down to the mill," said the man who was rowing the boat. "Then you will see some big splashing."

"I shall just go down to the mill with them," Little Water-Drop decided. And

down she went. And what do you suppose she did when she got there? "Br-rr-rr-splash!" said the big mill-wheel. And Little Water-Drop jumped right on and had a ride. She whirled round and round and round. "There, now!" she said, when at last she jumped off, "I have helped to grind a little bit of flour anyway."

"Indeed you have, and I am much obliged to you," said the rumbly voice of the old mill.

"Come on! Come on!" called the river. He was in as big a hurry as the brook. "Come on, and see the world! Or maybe you had rather stay here."

"Oh, no!" said Water-Drop. "I could n't stay here. I am only seeing the world and I must get home sometime." It was the first time that Water-Drop had said a word about home.

"Getting homesick?" asked the river. "I am beginning to feel that way myself."

"Where is your home?" asked Water-Drop.

"In the ocean."

"Is n't that nice!" Water-Drop danced faster. "We 'll just go right on home together," she said with a happy laugh.

"Toot-toot-toot! Good-afternoon!" whistled a big river steamboat. "If you like riding on wheels, Little Water-Drop, why not come and have a spin around on one of mine?"

"Whir-rr-rr," said the nearest wheel, "jump on!"

Little Water-Drop ran as fast as she could, gave a big jump, and there she was, spinning round and round and round. And I can assure you it was as much fun for her as spinning a top is for boys. She rode almost to the mouth of the river before she jumped off.

"I hear it!" she said, in a very joyful voice.

"What?" asked the river, who was busy splashing.

"The boom and the roar and the pounding of the ocean."

"Of course." And the river splashed higher. "We are almost home."

"Well, well, well!" said a familiar voice. "So here we are again. And how is the world, Little Water-Drop?"

Little Water-Drop looked right up into the old Sun's face. "I think it is a lovely place, Grandfather," she smiled, "but still—" And then she began to laugh.

"I see! I see!" The old Sun began to smile. "You are just like all the people in the world. There is n't any place you love so much as home. Am I right?"

"Indeed you are, Grandfather Sun," said Water-Drop. "I can hardly wait to see the big whales spout water, and the porpoises jump up in the air. I want to watch the sea-gulls darting about and the

little fishes wiggling their tails. And I want to jump up on a little white wave and splash around."

"Just where I found you," Grandfather Sun added.

"Yes, but you will never find me crying again," Little Water-Drop told him. "This time, when I get home—"

"You are home already!" shouted the Sun. "Can't you see that white wave coming out to meet you?"

But before he could say another word, what do you think? Water-Drop had splashed right up onto that white, foamy wave and was sailing away. "I'm so happy!" the old Sun heard her say. And I am very sure she has been happy ever since. And there is another thing I am very sure of—she found her little bag of salt.

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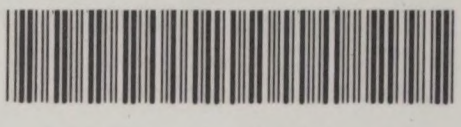

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